

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and apparatus for the automatic production of prints of digital photographic image data wherein the incoming image data are stored by order together with order data, and are presented in a sequence for processing. The image data are processed by order based on a processing sequence which includes both mandatory processing steps, to which the images of all orders are subjected, and optional processing steps to which the images of only specific orders are subjected. Prints are subsequently produced from the processed image data. The processing sequence of orders for subsequent processing steps is altered if the image data of one order pass through an optional processing step, thereby significantly increasing the processed order throughput of the system.